

# The Dead Horse DISPATCH

April 2009

A newsletter by and for the volunteers of Dead Horse Ranch State Park

## DHRSP Gets a Winter Face Lift



Volunteer Gary Munson (foreground) is working with teens under the supervision of Yavapai County Juvenile Probation to improve and install berms in the area between the second and third lagoons. Volunteers Bob Akey and Bill LeFleur have also been involved, along with Ranger Randy Victory.



The teens also worked with Volunteer John Ward to improve the trails around Cooper's Hawk Loop. The trails were widened and lined with rocks.

*submitted by Nan Hephner*

## Angler's Haven

Angling is booming at Dead Horse Ranch! The attraction of nice-sized trout has drawn those who prefer getting right out there with the fish, as well as many with rods who line the banks of the second and third lagoons. Hawks, eagles and herons are often spotted doing a little fishing on their own, to the delight of those who see them.



## Rockin' River Ranch State Natural Area

Verde River Greenway volunteers Ken Kingsley and Amy Gaiennie have been working on a biological evaluation of property recently acquired along the Verde River near Camp Verde. The 209 acre property, about 1 1/2 miles upstream from Beasley Flats, was acquired through the Heritage Fund. It is called Rockin' River Ranch State Natural Area.

"A biological evaluation looks for species of special concern," Ken said. Those include various habitat types found on the property, such as riparian shoreline, barren rock surfaces, mixed forest, grasslands, open water and developed land.

The couple also looked for endangered species. "We are pretty sure the willow flycatchers are here," Ken said, pointing out that he had seen three nests that he thought were built by that endangered species. The flycatchers nest in tamarisk, also called salt cedar, often considered an undesirable plant because of its insatiable appetite for water. "But we can't cut down the trees because it would take away habitat for the bird," he added.

There are two endangered fish in the river, the Colorado Pike Minnow and the razorback sucker. Neither is doing well as other introduced fish, such as catfish and bass, love to eat the smaller fish. Ken said it would be impossible to remove the problem fish from the river, but he does encourage everyone to go bass fishing.

Problems in the various habitats at Rockin' River include the tamarisk, tumbleweeds, bullfrogs, red crayfish, largemouth bass and the cowbird. Tumbleweeds quickly filled a plot of land which was cleared but never farmed.

And the cowbird is a threat to the willow flycatcher, as they lay their eggs in flycatcher nests. The cowbird baby hatches first and boots the smaller birds and out of the nest. Ken and Amy left the area at the end of February and will summer at Zion National Park in Utah. Their findings are gathered in a notebook, along with photos and a Powerpoint presentation. They have been helping at DHRSP for four years.

*Cont. on back page*



*Ken, with canine volunteer Cody, inspects the age and condition of Fremont cottonwoods on the property as part of the Biological Evaluation.*



*Amy pounds a rebar stake into the ground at Photo Point 9.*

# Volunteer News

## Coming & Goings

## Dates to Remember

\* Norm & Nan Hephner leave April 30th, will be traveling to the East in May, at Lathrop State Park in Colorado for the summer, and traveling in the West in October.

\* John & Wanda Ward (Coopers Hawk) depart April 27th, drive their rig to Alberta, and then travel east across Canada to Algonquin Provincial Park, Ontario, Canada  
\* Jim & Maryan Harris (Quail Loop) leave April 30th to "Home Sweet Home" in Granby, Colorado

\* Karen & Emerson Trushel (Cabin Hosts) depart April 30th. Their daughter Kristine will be accompanying them on their long journey back home to Ohio. Along the way they'll be stopping at Zion National Park and Bryce Canyon.

\* Laurie Blitsch is leaving April 30th and heading to Bear Mountain

\* Tom & Pam Sanor will be hosting at Raven Loop Campground starting on April Fool's Day. (Eric hopes that this isn't a practical joke!!)

\* Hey everyone!! The FRANKENROSE creature is coming back to Quail Loop on April 1st. This will be the year they get on the Price is Right TV Show.

\* Wayne & Helen Kemp host at Red Tail beginning April 1st. Wayne said he will be making Eric his famous Jambalaya.

7 - 2 p.m., Rededication of the volunteer and ranger memorial. All are welcome. The memorial is located at the back of Quail Loop.

12 - **EASTER**

13 - Volunteer Meeting, 9 am, Greenway

18 - Mickelson run through the park.

19-22 & 27-30 - Return of the Ancestors, "Bridging of the Americas," all 5 continents represented by medicine men and wisdom keepers, to unite the eagle and the condor in world peace.

23-26 - Verde Valley Birding & Nature Festival

25 - Kids Day is Saturday

27 - Volunteer Meeting, 9 am, Greenway

## May

11 - Volunteer Meeting, 9 am, Greenway

25 - Volunteer Meeting, 9 am, Greenway

## April MileStones

(Birthdays & Anniversaries)

3-Ruby Stolze

4-Joan Gray

11-Bill and Anne Zeller

13-Tom Sanor

20-Anne Howe

21-Shirley Oltmanns

Late update... Tom Howe: 3/26



## Rockin' River Ranch cont.

The newly acquired Rockin' River Ranch is within Arizona State Parks' designated Verde River Greenway expansion zone. The property is bisected by the Verde River and includes a broad cobble bar immediately downstream of the confluence with West Clear Creek. Approximately 54 acres is divided into six irrigated pastures for use by the horse boarding and breeding operation currently leasing the property. In the central portion of the property, buildings are being used by the horse ranch and for special events, such as weddings, meetings, and retreats.

## Bald Eagle 3rd Year

Bald Eagle 3rd Year - was photographed last winter at Farmington Bay, Utah. The bald eagle's resurgence is one of the great triumphs of conservation. Once nearly extinct, the symbol of America has made an astonishing comeback.  
posted on Flickr



## February Snow & Ice Storm!



The snow line crept clear down Mingus into Dead Horse Ranch State Park in February when temperatures dropped and a storm moved into the area. The white stuff was a morning surprise for campers.



## Redneck Alert!!!

The ranger residences are in a state of flux. Stop by soon to see the new herb garden and strawberry beds behind Ranger Eric's house. And, is that a chicken coop taking form behind the Christianson domain? Is it time to think of spring flowers and "peeps"? However, in 2006 Eric's porch sported a "planter" of questionable nature during the last renovations.



You might be a Redneck if you have a toilet on your front porch?



## Who Are Those Bag Ladies?

Maryan Pharo and Laurie Blitsch had spent an afternoon beading and when it was time to head home, a February rain storm let loose. To protect their "do's," the pair donned plastic bags.

Hi Eric O'Buzonas

Saw your pix in the Dispatch. Didn't know you were Irish. Hope everyone is well. We are volunteering at Suwannee River State Park in northern Florida. Plans for the summer are tentative. Take Care!  
Muriel

Hey, Eric, what a hoot—those newsletters are awesome. Way to go! You have put HUGE amounts of time into them. Whoever does your Photoshop trick pix is awesome, too—that one of Les as Cupid was hilarious! And you in that Christmas Tree "git up" for the Christmas Party—ah, the things you subject yourself to as a Park Ranger. Very impressive newsletters. You are doing great work, Eric—GREAT WORK! Thanks for sending those 2 newsletters and please put me on the list for all of the future issues, too. I look forward to seeing your creativity in action.  
John Parsons

Eric extends a big thank-you to everyone involved w/newsletter (ie Nan Hephner; Carolyn Meehan, Randy Victory) YOU GUYS make us look good!!